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Message Text

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15
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01

SP-03 SCCT-02 SY-04 STR-08 AID-20 DRC-01 /097 W
---------- 045009
R 060325Z SEP 74
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6622

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 10674

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EIND, PINR, PINS, RP
SUBJECT: REBEL MOTIVATIONS BEHIND WEYERHAUSER AMBUSHES

REF: STATE 193921 (A)
MANILA 10582 (B)
MANILA 10153 (C)

1. AT PRESENT WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THESIS THAT MUSLIM REBELS (MNLF OR OTHERWISE) ARE PURSUING ANTI-FOREIGN INVESTMENT OR ANTI-US STRATEGY AS HYPOTHESIZED REF A. WEYERHAUSER HAS ENCOUNTERED NO ANTI-AMERRCIAN SENTIMENT IN ITS CURRENT DIFFICULTIES. PAMPHLETS CONVEYED TO WEYERHAUSER BY LOCAL "BANGSA MORO ARMY" (AND ADDRESSED TO "CHRISTIAN MASSES") MAKE NO MENTION WHATEVER OF FOREIGNERS (BUT STRESS INTRIGUING ECUMENICAL THEME THAT MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS ALIKE SHOULD UNITE AGAINST MARCOS DICTATORSHIP.). ALTHOUGH MOTIVES FOR ATTACKS FAR FROM CLEAR, AT THIS POINT MOST LIKELY EXPLANTATION IS THAT WEYERHAUSER UNDER ATTACK BECAUSE IT IS ONLY LARGE EMPLOYER IN AREA WITH PRE-DOMINATLY CHRISTIAN LABOR FORCE WHICH HAS BEEN KNOWN TO SUPPORT ILAGAS (CHRISITIAN IRREGULARS), AND BECAUSE GOVERNMENT TROOPS ARE STATIONED AT CONCESSION.

2. AS FOR POSSIBILITY THAT WE MAY SEE MORE REBEL ATTACKS AGAINST US OR OTHER FOREIGN INVESTMENT ASSETS, OTHER
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FACTORS SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND AS FOLLOWS: 1) IN

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GENERAL, MUSLIM SENTIMENT NOT ANTI-US AND INDEED SIGNIFICANT
RESIDUE OF PRO-AMERICAN NOSTALGIA STILL REMAINS
FROM COLONIAL PERIOD, ALTHOUGH HOW LONG IT MAY LAST
NOT CERTAIN; 2) REBELS IN TIME HONORED MANNER OF GUERRILLAS
EVERYWHERE WILL ALWAYS BE TEMPTED TO PRACTICE EXTORTION
TACTICS AGAINST BIG OPERATORS (INCLUDING FOREIGN FIRMS)
IN THEIR TERRITORY, AND TO RETALIATE VIOLENTLY AGAINST NON-
COOPERATORS. (WE HAVE ALREADY SEEN EXAMPLES OF SUCH IN
EXTORTION ELSEWHERE IN MINDANAO); 3) IT IS CONCEIVABLEY WITHIN
REBEL MILITARY CAPACITY TO LAUNCH HIT -AND-RUN ATTACKS AGAINST
SIRTES AT SOME DISTANCE FROM AREAS WHERE FIGHTING NOW IN PROGRESS,
SHOULD THEY DECIDE TO DO SO.
SULLIVAN

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